

METHOD OF DOUBLE-SIDED ETCHING

DESCRIPTION

Background of Invention

[Para 1] 1. Field of the Invention

[Para 2] The present invention pertains to a method of double-sided etching, and more specifically, to a method of forming a micro spindle by double-sided etching.

[Para 3] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[Para 4] Micro electromechanical system (MEMS) technology is an emerging technology which highly integrates electronics and mechanics, and has been broadly adopted to fabricate various devices having electro and mechanical characteristics, such as micro sensors, micro actuators, micro motors, photosensitive switches, etc. MEMS devices generally have mechanical structures more complicated than semiconductor devices, and thus cannot be directly fabricated by standard semiconductor processes. Take the micro spindle, one of the most common structures in MEMS devices, for example, accurate shape and smooth surface condition are strictly required for ensuring reliability and stress-bearing capability.

[Para 5] Please refer to Fig.1 to Fig.3. Fig.1 is a schematic diagram of a micro spindle 10; Fig.2 and Fig.3 are schematic diagrams illustrating a conventional method of forming a micro spindle. As shown in Fig.1, the micro spindle is a suspension structure capable of being driven by a voltage, light

beams, or a magnetic field, and thereby rotates in the direction as the arrow indicates shown in Fig.1. Therefore, the micro spindle 10 must have an accurate shape, a smooth surface, and a uniform axis so as to guarantee reliability and stress-bearing capability. The conventional method of fabricating the spindle 10 is described below.

[Para 6] As shown in Fig.2, a wafer 20 is provided. Then, an etching stop layer 22 and a photo resist pattern 24 are respectively formed on the bottom surface and the top surface of the wafer 20. As shown in Fig.3, an etching process is followed to etch through the wafer 20 not covered by the photo resist pattern 24 until the etching stop layer 22.

[Para 7] According to the conventional method, however, equilibrium of the etching process and the thickness uniformity of the wafer 20 are not taken into consideration. Thus, the yield of the etching process cannot be well controlled because etching rates in different regions of the wafer 20 are not equal. For example, on the occasion of etching through the wafer 20, the overall area being etched varies dramatically, and leads to unexpected changes during the etching process. In addition, when the etching process is performed down to the etching stop layer 22, side etching effect tends to occur and therefore results in an undercut 26 as shown in Fig.3. As mentioned earlier, if the shape accuracy of the micro spindle degrades, reliability of the micro spindle will be seriously affected.

Summary of Invention

[Para 8] It is therefore a primary object of the present invention to a method of double-sided etching to overcome the aforementioned problems.

[Para 9] According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a method of forming a micro spindle is disclosed. The method includes the following steps:

[Para 10] providing a wafer comprising at least a spindle region and two through regions, the two through regions being respectively positioned on both sides of the spindle region;

[Para 11] partially removing the wafer in the spindle region from a first surface of the wafer; and

[Para 12] removing the wafer in the two through regions from a second surface of the wafer until the wafer is removed through to the first surface.

[Para 13] The method forms the micro spindle by means of double-sided etching, and thus is able to prevent excessive variation in the overall area being etched and prevent the side etching problem while the etching process is performed down to the etching stop layer. Consequently, the reliability and stress-bearing capability of the micro spindle is ensured.

[Para 14] These and other objectives of the present invention will no doubt become obvious to those of ordinary skill in the art after reading the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment that is illustrated in the various figures and drawings.

Brief Description of Drawings

[Para 15] Fig.1 is a schematic diagram of a micro spindle.

[Para 16] Fig.2 and Fig.3 are schematic diagrams illustrating a conventional method of forming a micro spindle.

[Para 17] Fig.4 through Fig.8 are schematic diagrams illustrating a method of forming a micro spindle according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Detailed Description

[Para 18] Please refer to Fig.4 through Fig.8. Fig.4 through Fig.8 are schematic diagrams illustrating a method of forming a micro spindle according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention. As shown in Fig.4, a wafer 50, such as a silicon wafer, is provided, and a photo resist pattern 52 is formed on the bottom surface of the wafer 50 to define the dimension of a spindle region 54. As shown in Fig.5, an etching process, such as a reactive ion etching (RIE) process, is performed to etch the wafer 50 unprotected by the photo resist pattern 52 down to a predetermined depth. It is appreciated that the predetermined depth must be greater than the sum of the deviation of the etching process to be performed and the deviation of the thickness of the wafer 50, and therefore the structure of the micro spindle will not be damaged during the etching process to be performed.

[Para 19] As shown in Fig.6, the photo resist pattern (not shown) is stripped, and a bonding layer 56 is utilized to bond the bottom surface of the wafer 50 and a carrier 58 together. Afterward, another photo resist pattern 60 is formed on the top surface of the wafer 50 to define the dimensions of two through regions 62. In this embodiment, the material of the bonding layer 56 is selected from photo resist, metal, silicon oxide, benzocyclobutene (BCB), polyimide, tape, UV tape, wax, and so on, which can be easily removed by wet etching, heating, or irradiating. The carrier 58 is selected from materials

compatible to semiconductor processes, such as silicon, glass, quartz, and ceramics.

[Para 20] As shown in Fig.7, another etching process, such as a RIE process, is performed to etch the wafer 50 unprotected by the photo resist pattern 60 in the through regions 62. It is noteworthy that when the etching process is performed down to the depth shown in Fig.7, the wafer 50 in the spindle region 54 is suspended. Meanwhile, the variation of overall area being etched is equal to the area of the wafer 50 in the through regions 62 minus the area of the wafer in the spindle region 54, and thus the overall area is not dramatically varied. In addition, since the etching process does not reach the bonding layer 56, side etching effect will not occur. It is also appreciated that the dimension of the spindle region 54 is slightly larger than the actual dimension of the micro spindle to be formed for increasing alignment tolerance of the second etching process, so that the shape and size of the micro spindle is more accurate.

[Para 21] As shown in Fig.8, the etching process is continued until etching through wafer 50 in the through regions. The photo resist pattern 60 on the top surface of the wafer 50 and the bonding layer 56 on the bottom surface of the wafer 50 are then removed for accomplishing fabrication of the micro spindle. The bonding layer 56 works to bond the wafer 50 and the carrier 58, and functions as an etching stop layer as well. When the etching process is performed down to the bonding layer 56, the overall area being etched varies extremely, and side etching may occur. However, the wafer 50 in the spindle region 54 is suspended, and the predetermined depth being etched in the first etching process takes the variations of the second etching process and the wafer 50 thickness into consideration in advance, and thus the wafer 50 in the spindle region 54 is not affected. Consequently, the structure of the micro spindle is ensured.

[Para 22] In comparison with prior art, the method of the present invention forms the micro spindle by means of double-sided etching, and thus is able to prevent excessive variation in overall area being etched and the side etching problem while the etching process is performed down to the etching stop layer. Consequently, the reliability and stress-bearing capability of the micro spindle is ensured.

[Para 23] Those skilled in the art will readily observe that numerous modifications and alterations of the device and method may be made while retaining the teachings of the invention. Accordingly, the above disclosure should be construed as limited only by the metes and bounds of the appended claims.